



**MINISTER
HUMAN SETTLEMENTS, WATER AND SANITATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**SPEAKING POINTERS FOR H.E. MINISTER LINDIWE SISULU, MINISTER OF
HUMAN SETTLEMENT, WATER AND SANITATION ON THE VIRTUAL 2020
HIGH LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM (HLPF) SPECIAL EVENT OF THE OFFICIAL
LAUNCH OF THE SDG 6 GLOBAL ACCELERATION FRAMEWORK**

**Main Theme: “Showcasing of stakeholder commitments on accelerating progress on SDG 6”
(Strengthen country planning, implementation and knowledge sharing for SDG 6 while
supporting country response to the COVID-19 pandemic.**

Pointers To Highlight Efforts to;

**Strengthen country planning, implementation and knowledge sharing for SDG 6 while
supporting country response to the COVID-19 pandemic.**

Date: 9 July 2020

Time: 14: 00-15: 30 GMT (SA time); 08:00- 09:30 am EDT (NY TIME)

Moderator, **Ms Lindsey Aldaco-Manner**

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

Member States, as the architects and champions of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agreed that SDGs are a transformational agenda, rather than just an extension of the MDGs, and that they should be more robust to provide a blueprint for the future of the planet. **When these SDGs were developed, little did the world foresee a crises of the magnitude presented by Covid-19.** The pandemic **reinvented the way the world perceived Water, and imposed an urgent and unwitting agenda**, as a global means to respond to its devastating impact.

Like many countries, South Africa made great strides since **1994 when only 50.4% of all households had access to an acceptable form of sanitation service and 55.1% had a reliable water supply service, to 2019 when sanitation services increased to 79% of households and 88%** in term of water supply. While there has been a notable increase in the number of people who have access to water and sanitation in the post-apartheid era, the number of people without access to reliable water supply and decent sanitation remains unacceptably high, and the pandemic has clearly highlighted their plight.

In response to the Covid-19 crisis, we established a **Water specific, National Command Centre at Rand Water Board**, one of the entities reporting to my Ministry, from where **all water supply initiatives across the country is coordinated and ensure that basic service of supplying water to all is achieved.** This was done through placing water tanks within communities not yet served, where formal infrastructure is not yet implemented for easy access to clean water. These water tanks are filled through tanker service rendered by 1 406 water tankers or trucks.

To date, it was reported that over **740 million litres of water was transported to fill the tanks, at an average of 10.31 Million Litres per day. This service is rendered to 158 Municipalities in total. currently there are 15 615 tanks in use, 7 645 delivered** through funds availed from reprioritisation of funds within the Department. Moderator, I am giving this account to highlight the commitment of the South African government to respond adequately to this pandemic and save lives. We would all agree that **Water and Sanitation remains the first line of defence in the absence of the vaccine, particularly for the poor who cannot have the luxury of other measures like self-quarantine and healthy eating, for obvious reasons.**

South Africa acknowledges the disruption on the plans of implementing SDGs and at the same time welcomes the acceleration and enhancement that was presented by the crisis, that saw an **additional R1.4 billion set aside**, for sustainable water services. This funds will assist to address the **backlog mainly created by the unforeseen growth in population and the unintended consequence of economic growth which saw a parallel increase in urbanisation.** The interventions will ensure that the services are more formalised and

significantly reduce tanker dependency, working with local government to ensure conversion to formal water resource that includes, borehole, spring or existing water main infrastructure and other sources, while focusing on bulk infrastructure investments to fast track access to formal water supply, increasing the rate at which we strive towards the SDG targets.

It is on this basis that I would like to quote the words of our former President, Nelson Mandela when he said, **“Freedom alone is not enough without light to read at night, without time or access to water to irrigate your farm, without the ability to catch fish to feed your family, madam Moderator, our founding President predicted today’s challenges correctly.** SDGs are about development and transformation as well as restoration of the dignity of people around the world, confirming these wise words, more so in our with a history of deprivation and exclusion of the majority of its people. It is on this basis that South Africa adopted human-rights based approach to the service delivery, also enshrined in our Constitution, which is what commits us more to achieve the SDG targets.

As the sector leader and custodian of water resources, my department developed an inclusive and holistic **National Water and Sanitation Master Plan, crucial for the to provide a national roadmap for development and implementation of our National Development Plan (NDP): Vision 2030, which has 76% convergence with the SDGs,** and prioritises job creation, the elimination of poverty, the reduction of inequality and growing an inclusive economy by 2030, addressing the themes of water security, flood protection, water supply and sanitation, water and climate and systematically facilitating water pollution prevention and control of our aquatic ecosystem conservation and water resources management, aligned with Agenda 2063 of the African Union. Moderator, there policy measures should provide assurance to this gathering that South Africa is on path to implement SDG-6 on Water and Sanitation and related goals.

It is on this basis that South Africa **views the launch of the SDG-6 Global Acceleration Framework as an instrument that provides us with a timely reminder, not only, of the past successes, or our historical context, but more for the challenges of our future endeavours.** The Framework further provides a window of opportunity during which “to accelerate the implementation of SDG-6 and serve as **“Call for Member States to embark on a new accelerated path towards a more sustainable delivery of Water and Sanitation”.**

In conclusion Moderator, on behalf of the government of South Africa and its people, I would like to reiterate the commitment for my country to deliver on this transformative agenda, and lastly allow me leave you with another quote by Nelson Mandela when he said “A Nation should not be judged by how it treats its highest citizens, but it's lowest ones” a statement proven correct during the Covid-19 crisis which forced many nations to attend to the poor and the unserved.

I THANK YOU.

